

wanted to serve our Nation. He was a valedictorian of his high school class. He graduated from William & Mary with near-perfect grade averages, and he was on a full scholarship at Stanford where he was working toward a doctorate in chemistry.

Two years after the attacks of September the 11th, the young man who had the world at his feet came home from Stanford for a visit. He told his dad, "I just don't feel like I'm doing something that matters. I want to serve my country. I want to protect our lands from terrorists, so I joined the Marines." When his father asked him if there was some other way to serve, Ryan replied that he felt a special obligation to step up because he had been given so much. Ryan didn't support me in the last election, but he supported our mission in Iraq, and he supported his fellow Marines.

Ryan was killed last month fighting the terrorists near the—Iraq's Syrian border. In his pocket was a poem that Ryan had read at his high school graduation, and it represented the spirit of this fine Marine. The poem was called "Don't Quit."

In our fight to keep America free, we'll never quit. We've lost wonderful Americans like Ryan McGlothlin. We cherish the memory of each one. We pray the loved ones—pray for the loved ones they've left behind, and we count it a privilege to be citizens of a country they served. We also honor them by acknowledging that their sacrifice has brought us to this moment, the birth of a free and sovereign Iraqi nation that will be a friend of the United States and a force for good in a troubled region of the world.

The story of freedom has just begun in the Middle East. And when the history of these days is written, it will tell how America once again defended its own freedom by using liberty to transform nations from bitter foes to strong allies. And history will say that this generation, like generations before, laid the foundation of peace for generations to come.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:08 a.m. in the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph Gildenhorn, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars;

former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; Ayman Al-Zawahiri, founder of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and senior Al Qaida associate. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Statement on House of Representatives Action on the "USA PATRIOT and Terrorism Prevention Reauthorization Act of 2005"**

*December 14, 2005*

The PATRIOT Act is essential to fighting the war on terror and preventing our enemies from striking America again. I commend the House for voting today on a bipartisan basis to reauthorize the PATRIOT Act.

The legislation reauthorizes the 16 sunset provisions and makes all but two permanent. It bolsters the law's significant protection of privacy and civil liberties. The legislation includes important provisions regarding seaport security, mass transportation security, and terrorist financing. It creates a new National Security Division at the Department of Justice, which was an important recommendation of the WMD Commission that I support. It includes important provisions to strengthen Federal efforts to combat the dangerous proliferation of methamphetamine, which has affected communities across the Nation.

The PATRIOT Act is scheduled to expire at the end of the month, but the terrorist threat will not expire on that schedule. In the war on terror, we cannot afford to be without this law for a single moment. I urge the Senate to pass this legislation promptly and reauthorize the PATRIOT Act.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 3199.

### **Executive Order 13392—Improving Agency Disclosure of Information**

*December 14, 2005*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and to ensure appropriate agency disclosure of information,

and consistent with the goals of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Policy.**

(a) The effective functioning of our constitutional democracy depends upon the participation in public life of a citizenry that is well informed. For nearly four decades, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) has provided an important means through which the public can obtain information regarding the activities of Federal agencies. Under the FOIA, the public can obtain records from any Federal agency, subject to the exemptions enacted by the Congress to protect information that must be held in confidence for the Government to function effectively or for other purposes.

(b) FOIA requesters are seeking a service from the Federal Government and should be treated as such. Accordingly, in responding to a FOIA request, agencies shall respond courteously and appropriately. Moreover, agencies shall provide FOIA requesters, and the public in general, with citizen-centered ways to learn about the FOIA process, about agency records that are publicly available (e.g., on the agency's website), and about the status of a person's FOIA request and appropriate information about the agency's response.

(c) Agency FOIA operations shall be both results-oriented and produce results. Accordingly, agencies shall process requests under the FOIA in an efficient and appropriate manner and achieve tangible, measurable improvements in FOIA processing. When an agency's FOIA program does not produce such results, it should be reformed, consistent with available resources appropriated by the Congress and applicable law, to increase efficiency and better reflect the policy goals and objectives of this order.

(d) A citizen-centered and results-oriented approach will improve service and performance, thereby strengthening compliance with the FOIA, and will help avoid disputes and related litigation.

**Sec. 2. Agency Chief FOIA Officers.**

(a) *Designation.* The head of each agency shall designate within 30 days of the date of this order a senior official of such agency (at the Assistant Secretary or equivalent level),

to serve as the Chief FOIA Officer of that agency. The head of the agency shall promptly notify the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB Director) and the Attorney General of such designation and of any changes thereafter in such designation.

(b) *General Duties.* The Chief FOIA Officer of each agency shall, subject to the authority of the head of the agency:

(i) have agency-wide responsibility for efficient and appropriate compliance with the FOIA;

(ii) monitor FOIA implementation throughout the agency, including through the use of meetings with the public to the extent deemed appropriate by the agency's Chief FOIA Officer, and keep the head of the agency, the chief legal officer of the agency, and the Attorney General appropriately informed of the agency's performance in implementing the FOIA, including the extent to which the agency meets the milestones in the agency's plan under section 3(b) of this order and training and reporting standards established consistent with applicable law and this order;

(iii) recommend to the head of the agency such adjustments to agency practices, policies, personnel, and funding as may be necessary to carry out the policy set forth in section 1 of this order;

(iv) review and report, through the head of the agency, at such times and in such formats as the Attorney General may direct, on the agency's performance in implementing the FOIA; and

(v) facilitate public understanding of the purposes of the FOIA's statutory exemptions by including concise descriptions of the exemptions in both the agency's FOIA handbook issued under section 552(g) of title 5, United States Code, and the agency's annual FOIA report, and by providing an overview, where appropriate, of certain general categories of agency records to which those exemptions apply.

(c) *FOIA Requester Service Center and FOIA Public Liaisons.* In order to ensure appropriate communication with FOIA requesters:

(i) Each agency shall establish one or more FOIA Requester Service Centers (Center), as appropriate, which shall serve as the first place that a FOIA requester can contact to seek information concerning the status of the person's FOIA request and appropriate information about the agency's FOIA response. The Center shall include appropriate staff to receive and respond to inquiries from FOIA requesters;

(ii) The agency Chief FOIA Officer shall designate one or more agency officials, as appropriate, as FOIA Public Liaisons, who may serve in the Center or who may serve in a separate office. FOIA Public Liaisons shall serve as supervisory officials to whom a FOIA requester can raise concerns about the service the FOIA requester has received from the Center, following an initial response from the Center staff. FOIA Public Liaisons shall seek to ensure a service-oriented response to FOIA requests and FOIA-related inquiries. For example, the FOIA Public Liaison shall assist, as appropriate, in reducing delays, increasing transparency and understanding of the status of requests, and resolving disputes. FOIA Public Liaisons shall report to the agency Chief FOIA Officer on their activities and shall perform their duties consistent with applicable law and agency regulations;

(iii) In addition to the services to FOIA requesters provided by the Center and FOIA Public Liaisons, the agency Chief FOIA Officer shall also consider what other FOIA-related assistance to the public should appropriately be provided by the agency;

(iv) In establishing the Centers and designating FOIA Public Liaisons, the agency shall use, as appropriate, existing agency staff and resources. A Center shall have appropriate staff to receive and respond to inquiries from FOIA requesters;

(v) As determined by the agency Chief FOIA Officer, in consultation with the FOIA Public Liaisons, each agency shall post appropriate information about its

Center or Centers on the agency's website, including contact information for its FOIA Public Liaisons. In the case of an agency without a website, the agency shall publish the information on the Firstgov.gov website or, in the case of any agency with neither a website nor the capability to post on the Firstgov.gov website, in the *Federal Register*; and

(vi) The agency Chief FOIA Officer shall ensure that the agency has in place a method (or methods), including through the use of the Center, to receive and respond promptly and appropriately to inquiries from FOIA requesters about the status of their requests. The Chief FOIA Officer shall also consider, in consultation with the FOIA Public Liaisons, as appropriate, whether the agency's implementation of other means (such as tracking numbers for requests, or an agency telephone or Internet hotline) would be appropriate for responding to status inquiries.

**Sec. 3. Review, Plan, and Report.**

(a) *Review.* Each agency's Chief FOIA Officer shall conduct a review of the agency's FOIA operations to determine whether agency practices are consistent with the policies set forth in section 1 of this order. In conducting this review, the Chief FOIA Officer shall:

(i) evaluate, with reference to numerical and statistical benchmarks where appropriate, the agency's administration of the FOIA, including the agency's expenditure of resources on FOIA compliance and the extent to which, if any, requests for records have not been responded to within the statutory time limit (backlog);

(ii) review the processes and practices by which the agency assists and informs the public regarding the FOIA process;

(iii) examine the agency's:

(A) use of information technology in responding to FOIA requests, including without limitation the tracking of FOIA requests and communication with requesters;

(B) practices with respect to requests for expedited processing; and

(C) implementation of multi-track processing if used by such agency;

(iv) review the agency's policies and practices relating to the availability of public information through websites and other means, including the use of websites to make available the records described in section 552(a)(2) of title 5, United States Code; and

(v) identify ways to eliminate or reduce its FOIA backlog, consistent with available resources and taking into consideration the volume and complexity of the FOIA requests pending with the agency.

(b) *Plan.*

(i) Each agency's Chief FOIA Officer shall develop, in consultation as appropriate with the staff of the agency (including the FOIA Public Liaisons), the Attorney General, and the OMB Director, an agency-specific plan to ensure that the agency's administration of the FOIA is in accordance with applicable law and the policies set forth in section 1 of this order. The plan, which shall be submitted to the head of the agency for approval, shall address the agency's implementation of the FOIA during fiscal years 2006 and 2007.

(ii) The plan shall include specific activities that the agency will implement to eliminate or reduce the agency's FOIA backlog, including (as applicable) changes that will make the processing of FOIA requests more streamlined and effective, as well as increased reliance on the dissemination of records that can be made available to the public through a website or other means that do not require the public to make a request for the records under the FOIA.

(iii) The plan shall also include activities to increase public awareness of FOIA processing, including as appropriate, expanded use of the agency's Center and its FOIA Public Liaisons.

(iv) The plan shall also include, taking appropriate account of the resources available to the agency and the mission of the agency, concrete milestones, with specific timetables and outcomes to be achieved, by which the head of the agency, after consultation with the OMB

Director, shall measure and evaluate the agency's success in the implementation of the plan.

(c) *Agency Reports to the Attorney General and OMB Director.*

(i) The head of each agency shall submit a report, no later than 6 months from the date of this order, to the Attorney General and the OMB Director that summarizes the results of the review under section 3(a) of this order and encloses a copy of the agency's plan under section 3(b) of this order. The agency shall publish a copy of the agency's report on the agency's website or, in the case of an agency without a website, on the Firstgov.gov website, or, in the case of any agency with neither a website nor the capability to publish on the Firstgov.gov website, in the *Federal Register*.

(ii) The head of each agency shall include in the agency's annual FOIA reports for fiscal years 2006 and 2007 a report on the agency's development and implementation of its plan under section 3(b) of this order and on the agency's performance in meeting the milestones set forth in that plan, consistent with any related guidelines the Attorney General may issue under section 552(e) of title 5, United States Code.

(iii) If the agency does not meet a milestone in its plan, the head of the agency shall:

(A) identify this deficiency in the annual FOIA report to the Attorney General;

(B) explain in the annual report the reasons for the agency's failure to meet the milestone;

(C) outline in the annual report the steps that the agency has already taken, and will be taking, to address the deficiency; and

(D) report this deficiency to the President's Management Council.

**Sec. 4. Attorney General.**

(a) *Report.* The Attorney General, using the reports submitted by the agencies under subsection 3(c)(i) of this order and the information submitted by agencies in their annual FOIA reports for fiscal year 2005, shall submit to the President, no later than 10 months

from the date of this order, a report on agency FOIA implementation. The Attorney General shall consult the OMB Director in the preparation of the report and shall include in the report appropriate recommendations on administrative or other agency actions for continued agency dissemination and release of public information. The Attorney General shall thereafter submit two further annual reports, by June 1, 2007, and June 1, 2008, that provide the President with an update on the agencies' implementation of the FOIA and of their plans under section 3(b) of this order.

(b) *Guidance.* The Attorney General shall issue such instructions and guidance to the heads of departments and agencies as may be appropriate to implement sections 3(b) and 3(c) of this order.

**Sec. 5. OMB Director.** The OMB Director may issue such instructions to the heads of agencies as are necessary to implement this order, other than sections 3(b) and 3(c) of this order.

**Sec. 6. Definitions.** As used in this order: (a) the term "agency"; has the same meaning as the term "agency"; under section 552(f)(1) of title 5, United States Code; and (b) the term "record"; has the same meaning as the term "record"; under section 552(f)(2) of title 5, United States Code.

**Sec. 7. General Provisions.**

(a) The agency reviews under section 3(a) of this order and agency plans under section 3(b) of this order shall be conducted and developed in accordance with applicable law and applicable guidance issued by the President, the Attorney General, and the OMB Director, including the laws and guidance regarding information technology and the dissemination of information.

(b) This order:

- (i) shall be implemented in a manner consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations;
- (ii) shall not be construed to impair or otherwise affect the functions of the OMB Director relating to budget, legislative, or administrative proposals; and
- (iii) is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, sub-

stantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by a party against the United States, its departments, agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
December 14, 2005.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 16, 2005]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on December 19.

### **Memorandum on Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act**

*December 14, 2005*

Presidential Determination No. 2006-05

*Memorandum for the Secretary of State*

*Subject:* Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 7(a) of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-45) (the "Act"), I hereby determine that it is necessary to protect the national security interests of the United States to suspend for a period of 6 months the limitations set forth in sections 3(b) and 7(b) of the Act. My Administration remains committed to beginning the process of moving our Embassy to Jerusalem.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress, accompanied by a report in accordance with section 7(a) of the Act, and to publish the determination in the *Federal Register*.

This suspension shall take effect after transmission of this determination and report to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**